

MORE GEOGRAPHIC MNEMONICS

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In his book Beyond Language (Scribner's, 1967), Dmitri A. Borgmann presented a curious problem entitled "Geographic Mnemonics." The problem concerned a "device for making it easy and enjoyable to commit lists of states and state capitals to memory. The trick is to devise sentences in which the names are buried, properly matched."

Then Mr. Borgmann listed his group of mnemonic creations. However, his list was incomplete, containing devices for remembering only 18 of the 50 states. It was left to the reader to "draft the corresponding mnemonic sentences for the remaining 32 states." Only one limitation was imposed: each sentence must have a minimum of seven words, a maximum of eleven.

Having responded to Mr. Borgmann's appeal, I have been successful in creating mnemonic sentences for 18 more states.

Here is Mr. Borgmann's original list:

1. I might exasperate my beau, stingy as I am.
2. The main evil of the Augustan age was imperialism.
3. Color a doll, hoyden, very neatly and quietly.
4. Washing tons of laundry requires Olympian powers.
5. A virgin, I allure the rich Mondays and all other days.
6. "He's ill!", I noise about each spring, fielding comebacks deftly.
7. Missis, sip pink lemonade slowly, but eat flapjacks on the double!
8. Can Eva dance outside, with cars on city streets?
9. Ken, tuck your shirt in and be frank, forthright, and courageous.
10. Del, aware he is watched, must do very well.
11. Did Mary land as Anna polished apples?
12. Go north, Carol, in a car owned by Flora Leigh.
13. Still more gongs, Al, embarrass us all.
14. Gum on tan apparel irritates Rachel, enabling her to rant.
15. Lewis cons Indians into believing that a nomad is on duty.
16. Al, ask Anne and June a useful question!

17. Louis, Ian and Eric bat on rouge-colored playing fields.
18. Are you afraid a hobo is entering your house?

Here is my list of additional states:

1. A lab amalgam was prepared in Montgomeryshire County, Wales.
2. Omar, I zonated the property with a Phoenix-shaped tool.
3. Hark, ansa-shaped vases may be shattered by little rocks!
4. A calif or Niam-Niam takes a sacrament over his dead.
5. This is where I connect, I cut the hart for dinner.
6. Flor, I dally without Allah as seer of my future.
7. The sign read: Georgian botanist slept under this fat lantana shrub.
8. "Haw, ai!" I called as Honol, ululant beast, veered left.
9. Pekans assimilate much, but are too wise to tope kalsomine.
10. In Diana's shop, I saw thin Diana polishing furniture.
11. Miss, our index card "Thomas Jefferson, City Boy" is incorrect.
12. "New hamps," Hi read, as he pulled the beacon cord.
13. She bought a new jersey that was without rent one.
14. The new Yorkshire terrier was lying under the regal banyan tree.
15. By the brook, Lahoma, by the brook, Lahoma, cityward we go..
16. By sacrificing without myrrh, Ode, I slander Providence.
17. Beware the rut ahead of the salt lake, city slicker!
18. "You must go west, Virginia," said Charles tonight.

Someone out there, please pursue the problem and come up with sentences for the remaining fourteen states (Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, New Mexico, Iowa, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont, Tennessee, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts). As you can see, the task is not an easy one. Good luck!